THE
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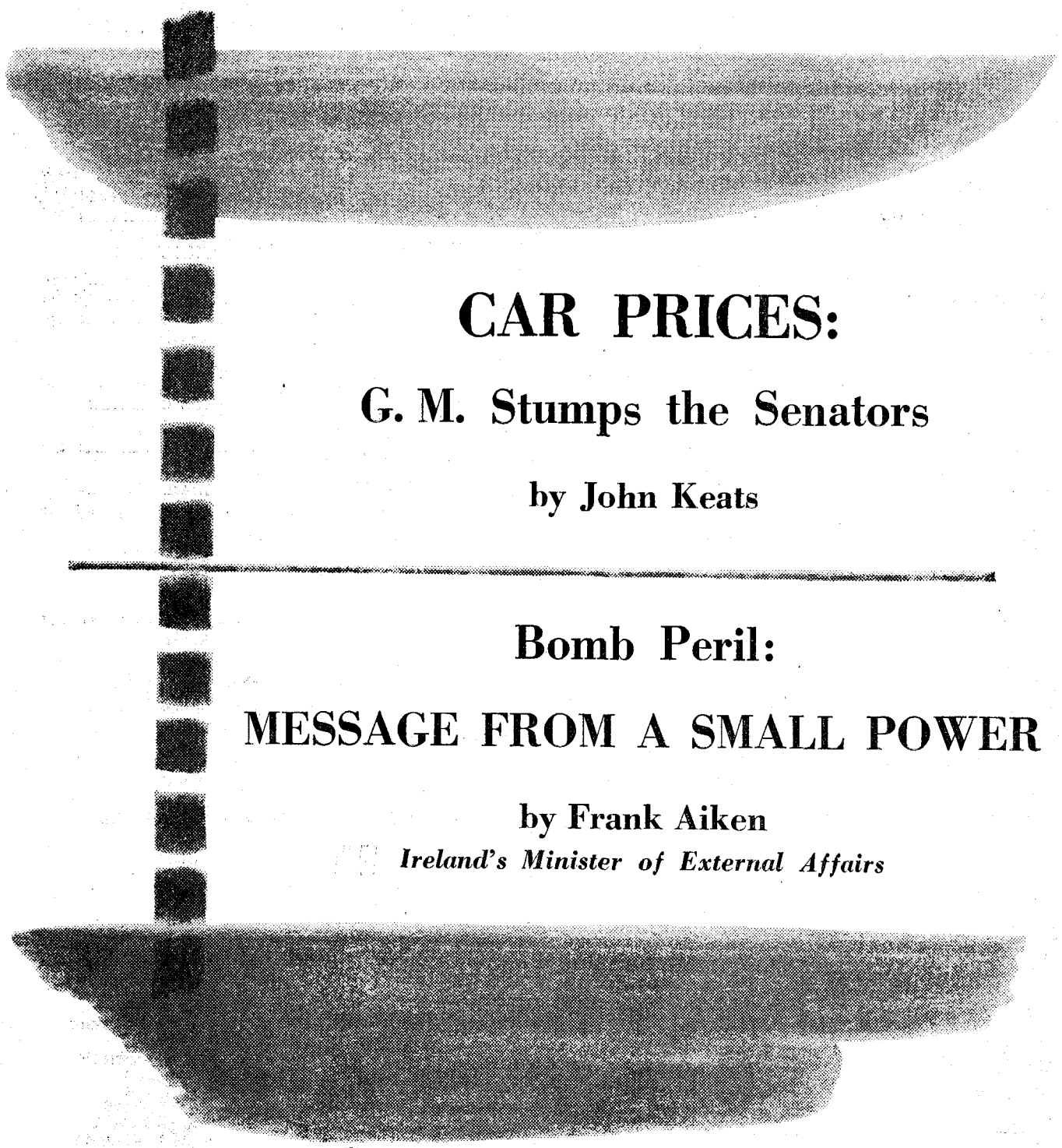

CAR PRICES:

G. M. Stumps the Senators

by John Keats

Bomb Peril:

MESSAGE FROM A SMALL POWER

by Frank Aiken

Ireland's Minister of External Affairs

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LETTERS

A Democrat in Brookline!

Dear Sirs: The November 16 issue is splendid—your description of a "Landslide in a Vacuum" is absolutely correct in its estimate of what happened on Election Day. But there is a second "Incident in Massachusetts" which your readers may not have read about: the retirement from the state senate of Philip O. Bowker, Republican, of Brookline. Bowker's chairmanship for six years of the state Un-American Activities Committee seemed to guarantee him perpetuity in office, especially since Brookline had never sent a Democrat to the state senate. But Peter M. McCormack, an Irish Democrat, rolled up enough votes in the gerrymandered Brookline-West Roxbury district to retire Bowker permanently from Massachusetts political life.

It is hardly profitable to play the red-baiting disc any more.

PHILIP JONES

Boston, Mass.

Mirror, Anyone?

Dear Sirs: I don't know which impresses me most: the resemblance of the drive of Knowland *et al* to get Labor to Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, or the resemblance of the situation of certain Republicans now to Lucifer and his cohorts in Canto II of *Paradise Lost* (a literary work not often read these days).

In any event, one thing is going to be really interesting. It seems to me that in proportion as the Republicans take the steps which are indispensable, if they are going to regain the confidence of the country, they are going to be out of business! Resolving this one may require mirrors.

Mr. Eisenhower, with his $81 billion budget, and $12 billion deficit, seems so confused about who the spenders are that I doubt if he can get around to it. Do you think Messrs. Nixon and Alcorn can do it?

SELWYN COLE

Los Angeles, Calif.

The Artist-Physician

Dear Sirs: I am preparing a detailed catalogue of the works of the artist-physician, Dr. William Rimmer (1816-1879). I would appreciate learning of the existence of paintings, drawings or sculpture of Dr. Rimmer's, and of any other information relative to him. Dr. Rimmer was active in Boston, New York and Providence in the 1860s and 1870s.

RICHARD S. NUTT
The Historical Library
Yale University School of Medicine
New Haven 11, Connecticut

Some Men Are Men

Dear Sirs: Thanks to Eve Merriam for a particularly flashing article, "The Matriarchal Myth" [November 8]. . . . She has finally taken the whole exasperating discussion about Momism by the scruff of its neck and stood it upon its feet: "The emasculation of men has not been caused by woman. It is a social, not a sexual affair."

I think, however, that the first of these two feet is somewhat lame. To prove that Mama is not Papa does not require the castration of the male. Miss Merriam takes our collective manhood too quickly away. . . . True, *organization man* seems to fit the placid mold into which he has been poured—but not all American males are junior executives on the make. Is Detroit Madison Avenue—and are the factory workers at River Rouge quite as desexed as Miss Merriam makes all men out to be? Isn't this devitalization she talks about more a class trait than a sexual trait?

Perhaps I'm prejudiced, but I think there's still a lot of life left in the old boys. Maybe the men in the gray flannel suits have tired blood—but there are still some thirty or forty million males who punch time clocks. These days they seem to be asleep—but hibernations don't last forever. Mama Bear needn't worry when they wake up—but Corporation Bear may have to.

MILTON OST

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Sirs: A dozen orchids to Eve Merriam. But there's a real dilemma for men, it seems to me: What does it mean to be a *man* in the twentieth century? A male today can't prove his manhood by toting a gun and shooting Indians or bad men, nor can he wear armor and rescue maidens in distress. If he proves it by beating up his wife is he acting in the real he-man tradition? Or if he helps out with the dishes. . . . is he disproving he's a man?

I've wondered. Physical courage does seem to have had its day when the end product becomes nuclear war that would wipe out the human race. If ideal behavior for men were known, they could lay off blaming women for all the ills and get on with their own development toward what they should be.

What does a true man do in this age? All I can say, as a woman, is that moral courage is the basic essential. . . .

ROSE G. LEVAN

East Chicago, Ind.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1958
VOLUME 187, NUMBER 18

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

Missiles and Misgivings

The November 14 headline was "McElroy Asserts U.S. Is Recasting Global Strategy" — by substituting U.S.-based intercontinental missiles for European-based intermediate-range missiles. The November 15 headline was in flat contradiction: "Allies Reassured U.S. Stands Firm on Missile Policy." The latter was based on a State Department announcement; the earlier, on a McElroy press conference. Whom are we to believe — the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of State?

No one who is not privileged to attend the meetings of the National Security Council can be sure, but the answer is probably both political and technological. It all began with the discovery, in October, 1957, that the USSR was in the lead in missile development. The most spectacular of our reactions was to press intermediate-range missiles on our allies, ostensibly for their defense but also to prove to them that they had not chosen the wrong side in the nuclear-missiles contest.

But why IRBMs? Simply because they were the only ones we could have ready within a period — say a year — which would make sense if the Russian menace was as great as it was played up to be. The production of Thors and Jupiters was put on a crash basis, and in fact a few have been sent abroad. But there were grave liabilities in the program from the start, and Secretary McElroy's remarks are in effect a belated admission that all was not, is not, and never will be, well in this sector of the Cold War effort.

One difficulty is that the missiles are the wrong type for their announced purpose or, probably, for any purpose. The announced purpose is retaliatory, in the event of a Soviet attack. But these IRBMs are liquid-fueled, and the countdowns at Cape Canaveral give an idea of how long it takes to launch this type of rocket. At the same time the launching sites are highly vulnerable. Consequently, if the Russians were insane enough to launch a nuclear attack on Britain or the continent and did not succeed in knocking out our IRMBs in the first try, they could fire at least one more salvo before we could get into the air such of our missiles as might still be operational. The Russians would have a minimal two-to-one advantage, besides the advantage of surprise, which adds up to a pretty weak coefficient of deterrence.

If the IRBMs are inherently slow and vulnerable, they are also unwieldy from the standpoint of control and decision. Dual control is implicit in their use. The Atomic Energy Act requires that the nuclear warheads be kept in American hands. But the unarmed rocket must be in the hands of nationals of the country providing the site, since even the most ardent allies wish to have some defense not only against a foreign aggressor, but against an American screwball who might precipitate an exchange desired by no one else. Even a brief symposium preparatory to launching hardly makes for an ideal operational situation.

The worst defect of this improvised weapon, however, is that nobody wants it. Distaste ranges from resigned acquiescence, as in the case of Italy and Turkey (neither of which really has any choice in the matter), to obdurate negation in most of the rest of Europe. As the *Wall Street Journal* puts it, "We have had to cajole, bargain with and even bribe our allies to permit their [IRBMs'] emplacement." This, the *Journal* adds, does not make for happy allies.

These considerations may have led to Secretary McElroy's second thoughts. They did not lead to second thoughts on the part of Secretary Dulles, who promptly knocked his colleagues flat. Just the same, taking the long (i.e., two-year) view, it is a fairly safe bet that few IRBMs will be emplaced in Europe, and the defense of America will devolve on ICBMs, probably solid-fueled and safely based on the home grounds. When those missiles are ready, perhaps there will be further second thoughts, and hopefully another Secretary of State.

Pacifists and Voters

It is, of course, axiomatic in American politics that pacifists are anathema to the voters; that any candidate who utters the word "peace," except by way of execration, is more likely to be tarred and feathered than elected. Nevertheless last week we had occasion to refer editorially to one would-be political suicide, William H. Meyer of Vermont, a Quaker, who campaigned

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for repeal of peace-time conscription, admission of Red China to the United Nations, and American leadership in the movement toward disarmament and peace. Something went wrong with the axioms and Meyer was elected to the lone Vermont Congressional seat, the first Democrat in a century to be so honored. But the dour Vermonters were not unique. The prize exhibit in the political rogues' gallery is Democratic Congressman-elect Byron L. Johnson of Colorado, who beat John G. Mackie by the comfortable margin of 94,000 votes to 79,000 in a district which had been solidly Republican for twenty years. During the campaign Mr. Mackie, a World War II infantry veteran, expressed willingness to "take a rifle and go to Quemoy." He disapproved severely of Mr. Johnson, a former professor at the University of Denver, a member of the National Council of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and a citizen who was saved from being a conscientious objector in World War II only by physical disqualification. "Our only choice in this atomic era," Johnson replied to the embattled Mackie, "is either to live together or die together." So, for the present, he's going to live in Washington, while Mackie stays in Colorado.

Of course these two cases don't prove much, but then very few candidates spoke out for recognizing Red China or trying to achieve peace. Can it be that the voters are not quite as reactionary as they are pictured and, given a choice, may sometimes choose benignly, liberally and intelligently?

Debating Society — Plus

It is time that the United Nations stopped agreeing politely with its detractors. Instead of describing itself as a debating society (said Assembly President Charles Malik to the National Women's Press Club the other day: "The U.N. provides the opportunity of perpetual discussion"), it should shift the spotlight from its Political Committee, where everyone is lost in outer space at the moment, to one of the committees in the basement — where sometimes revolutionary things get done.

Recently the Second Committee, for instance, furthered the cause of internationalism by a plan for the so-called underdeveloped countries that may well have healthy repercussions in the overdeveloped ones. Through this plan, called the United Nations Technical Assistance in Public Administration, countries long on problems and short on trained personnel can ask for a U.N.-recruited expert to give them an international helping hand. Perhaps planes are not running on time in Ghana since British civil servants moved out — lock, stock and experience; the U.N. will find a man to fill the gap while he trains a Ghanan. Treasury-trouble in the Sudan? A U.N.-recruited economist will look over the books while his prospective Sudanese successor looks over his shoulder. The expert may be Swedish, Polish or whatever; but as long as he is on the job, he is a United Nations — an international — man.

Care has been taken, in drawing up the plan, to quell the fears both of the former colonial powers, loath to relinquish parental influence, and of the aid-requesting countries, wary of new masters. The number of specialists will be kept to twenty or thirty during a one-year trial period, and the specialists can be dismissed by the host countries even before the period is up. The U.N. experts will get only the going local wage from their hosts; where necessary, the U.N. will make up the difference.

So far the underdeveloped countries, riddled with growing pains, are the principal beneficiaries of the new plan. But is there nothing on which the big, industrial nations could use some non-partisan technical advice? What about a thrifty Finnish economist to look over our national debt? Or an American clothing manufacturer to teach the Russians that a dress or suit can be produced to sell for something less than a month's wages?

Fallout's Second Villain

So far the chief villain in atomic fallout has appeared to be strontium-90, but now comes Dr. Linus Pauling, California Tech chemist and Nobel Prize-winner, to uncover another product — carbon-14 — which, he says, is many times more dangerous to health than the strontium isotope. Dr. Pauling, who views all statements on fallout by the Atomic Energy Commission with extreme skepticism, looked into carbon-14 precisely because two years ago Commissioner W. F. Libby of the A.E.C. said it was *not* dangerous. On the basis of his own investigations, Dr. Pauling reports in *Science*: ". . . One year of [nuclear] testing is expected to cause in the world an estimated total of about 55,000 children with gross physical or mental defects, 170,000 still-births and childhood deaths and 425,000 embryonic and neonatal deaths."

These figures are about seventeen times the numbers usually estimated as the probable effects of fallout from a normal year's testing of nuclear bombs. Clearly, Mr. Libby's innocuous carbon-14 needs further investigation.

The Automation Depression

We don't hear much of automation these days. There was a flurry of interest a few years ago, many articles and several books were written and forgotten, and everybody got bored with the subject. Everybody, that is, except displaced workers. The fact that workers have been displaced by machines, and more — many, many more — will suffer the same fate, comes to mind

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only because the International Longshoremen's Association crammed Madison Square Garden last week to complain that the benefits of waterfront "automation" are not being shared with the workers, with the result that the total hours worked by dockers in New York declined from a total of 46 million in 1956 to about 42 million in 1958. And actually that's not automation at all, but merely advanced mechanization, without benefit of electronics or any really sophisticated technology.

The real point is that we are stumbling blindly into the automation era with no concept or plan to reconcile the need of workers for income and the need of business for cost-cutting and worker-displacing innovations. A part of the current unemployment — about four million, with the much-touted recovery well under way — is due to the automation component of the capital-goods' boom which preceded the recession. The boom gave work while it lasted, but the improved machinery requires fewer man-hours per unit of output. The next capital-goods' boom will likewise leave its residue of unemployment. In the meantime the adult population keeps growing at the rate of about 12 per cent a decade and we can count on between 750,000 and 1,000,000 extra job-seekers every year.

The contribution of automation to the recession, now hopefully over, is not the actual problem. The problem we shall have to face some time is that the working force is expansive, while latter-day industrial technology is contractive of man-hours. Heretofore the service industries have taken up the slack, but there is every indication that the gap is growing wider despite the standard reassurances to the effect that technological unemployment is either a figment of the imagination or a self-curing condition. Nobody looks ahead to the sixties and seventies except to envision ever-rising levels of prosperity. At the same time the fear of a recurrence of the 1929-1939 economic nightmare has never entirely left us. Can it be that the hopes and the fears are not inconsistent — that vastly greater prosperity is possible if we are able to lift ourselves to a level of economic foresight and planning to match our technological progress — and that a depression as devastating as that of the twenties is likely if we don't?

CAR PRICES

G. M. STUMPS the SENATORS . . *by John Keats*

JUST AS IF Detroit were not having enough difficulty this year, comes now a clutch of Senators who demand that the Eisenhower Administration drag General Motors executives into federal court, there to try to find out whether they might not be guilty of some kind of crime. Their own investigation of G.M., the Senators hasten to say, yields absolutely no courtroom evidence that any crime has been committed.

All that the majority of the Kefauver Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly* have to present is a bill of suspicion. They suspect that G.M. seems able to:

¶ *Rig sales prices of new and used automobiles.*

¶ *Corner the market in parts and raw materials.*

¶ *Obtain preferential treatment from steel companies.*

¶ *Drown any competitor in his last bucket of red ink.*

¶ *Create either a boom or a depression.*

Again, the Senators are quick to say they don't know whether G.M. does any or none of these horrid things, but — they say — if the possibility exists that it might do any of them now or later, then the Administration ought to chop the corporation up into little bits as a public service. Therefore, they ask, would the Justice Department be so kind as at least to ease, or at worst to confirm, the Senatorial suspicions?

Legal theory, of course, frowns on such fishing expeditions as the Senators wish the Justice Department to undertake, but there is plenty of daylight between accepted legal theory and actual practice, and nimble lawyers scamper through the open spaces all the time. Moreover, G.M. itself might consent to public examination merely to maintain good public relations, on grounds that continued refusal to submit fact and figure to the Government — no matter how innocent G.M.; no matter how legally correct such refusal might be — cannot fail to make the public suspicious. Making the public any more suspicious than current sales indicate, is not good for General Motors.

Meanwhile, there is some merit to the cynical view that the Kefauver subcommittee's report is more of a political document than it is a legal complaint. It is difficult to imagine the Eisenhower Administration leaping at the chance to harass its big, best friend in Detroit. On the other hand, if the Administration does nothing, then even the most unimaginative Democrat will not

*Report: Study of Administered Prices in the Automobile Industry, 85th Congress (Gov't Printing Office, 1958).

JOHN KEATS is author of the just-published The Insolent Chariots, *which deals with the auto industry;* The Crack in the Picture Window, *and other books.*

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find it difficult to locate still another stick with which to belabor a fairly dead elephant in the 1960 elections.

A more charitable view is that the Senators are neither Inquisitorial nor Machiavellian, but simply human, for the subcommitte report is more like a despairing cry of a customer sinking in quicksand than it is like anything else. Here is unfolded the whole grimy story of the tortuous sales practices of Detroit and the dealers; of the repeal by G.M. of the laws of supply and demand; of the expensive asininity of styling, horsepower-races and lying advertising; of the fact that no manner or means of competition occurs in Detroit that could conceivably help the customer either to a better car or to a different car, much less to lower prices. All this is presented within an historical context that works as inevitably toward a hopeless conclusion as any Greek tragedy. Despite the uncomfortable prose that custom demands of *The Congressional Record*, the reader gets the point: the customer is inevitably done in by capricious forces beyond individual man's control.

THE REPORT begins by briefly noting that one out of every seven jobs in this country is directly or indirectly dependent upon the automobile industry, and that this chiefly means "dependent upon General Motors." In 1921, eighty-eight separate American automobile firms were in business; today there are only five, and of these, three control 90.4 per cent of sales — and of the three, G.M. holds 50 per cent of the total market. G.M. is the biggest corporation in the world, with sales in 1957 totaling $11,000,000,000.

In achieving this enviable position, G.M. has faithfully followed the precepts of its founder, W. C. Durant, who went about the land gobbling up as many automobile firms and related industries as he could find, candidly explaining: "I was for getting every kind of thing in sight, playing safe all along the line."

So well did G.M. succeed in this pursuit that, in 1923, Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., then in charge of the company's destiny, could complacently face up to a momentous decision: "To determine whether we would operate under a centralized or decentralized form of administration."

"Decentralization was analogous to free enterprise," Mr. Sloan explained. "Centralization, to regimentation." He paused, and then in Augustan tones, remarked: "All, of course, within the area of General Motors."

THAT G.M.'s present view of itself is still somewhat regal, if not downright Bourbonistic, was demonstrated when Harlow Curtice, at the time still G.M.'s president, appeared before the Kefauver subcommittee:

> *Sen. Kefauver*: "Mr. Curtice, do you regard the growth of your company from about one-third [of the sales market] in 1929 or 1930 to over one-half, and the decline by the independents from one-fourth to less than five per cent, as a healthy trend in the economy and in the automobile industry?"
>
> *Mr. Curtice*: "I regard that as a healthy situation as far as General Motors is concerned, yes."
>
> *Sen. Kefauver*: "Not so far as General Motors is concerned, Mr. Curtice, I am talking about the country and the industry generally."
>
> *Mr. Curtice*: "I think it is a healthy situation for the country and the industry in general."

Senator Kefauver, however, while recognizing that the nation's economy is predicated on the health of its automobile industry, was not so sure that the nation should be dragged along in the wake of G.M.'s private fortunes. He remarked:

> Years ago, if an automobile manufacturer made a mistake — priced his car too high, or came out with a design which did not appeal to buyers — the result, while fatal to him, was not necessarily injurious to the automobile industry as a whole, and certainly not to the entire economy. The market which he lost was filled by one or the other of his many competitors. . . .
>
> Today, however, if the Big Three [G.M., Ford and Chrysler] raise their prices unduly, or put on the market models which do not attract customers, or if there is an extended work stoppage because of a labor dispute, there is little alternative aside from foreign cars to which customers can turn. They can only buy, or not buy, and today they appear to be doing the latter in large numbers.

Thus, Senator Kefauver implied, if Detroit doesn't sell its wares, then Detroit does not order the raw materials to make more cars; then unemployment in Detroit means lower production and lower employment elsewhere; then we have what the Administration euphemistically calls recessions, or rolling readjustments — the least serious by-product of this being political belching and voter disenchantment.

GENERAL MOTORS' historic response to nagging Congressional questions has been (a) that this is a free country made great by free enterprise and (b) that the public likes what G.M. makes more than it likes what other manufacturers produce and (c) why should G.M. be penalized just because its free enterprise makes the customers happy?

This was once again the G.M. philosophy during the recent hearings, and while it might be difficult to quarrel with this point of view, the Senators found it not so difficult to quarrel with the end results of G.M.'s practices. For one thing, it irritated them to learn that while G.M. pays no attention to its competitors in arriving at the prices of G.M. automobiles, the competitors feel they must pay attention to G.M.'s prices in arriving at *theirs*. G.M.'s sheer size and power have placed it in the happy situation of being able to fix prices on its own terms, and Mr. Curtice's testimony showed the terms to be these:

G.M. estimates the total cost of producing as many cars as may be made in a 180-day work-year (i.e., 80 per cent of what's left of the year after deducting all non-work days), then adds a sum sufficient to bring in a 20 per cent profit on G.M.'s net worth, after taxes. Thus, the anticipated profit is regarded as part of the cost of production, along with the less arcane costs of overhead, advertising, tools, labor, materials, etc. Divide the grand total by the number of cars to be produced during the 180 days, and you have the wholesale unit price of each car. If

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G.M. works more than 180 days (or makes more cars within them), and sells more cars than this "standard volume" of production, then there will be extra dividends and bonuses for corporate officers. If it works fewer days, or sells fewer cars, then, of course, profit shrinks. Testimony indicated, however, that this scheme has worked consistent wonders for G.M., because during the last ten years, the rate of return after taxes averaged 25 per cent—not 20—ranging from a low of 19 per cent to a high of 37.5 per cent.

WHAT this means to the customer is simply that the laws of supply and demand have nothing whatever to do with the price he'll have to pay for his G.M. car—but that the total size of the world's largest corporation could have. Thus, the bigger G.M. grows, the more the customer will be charged — unless G.M.'s car production keeps pace with its plant expansion (i.e., net worth), which doesn't always happen. Indeed, Mr. Curtice gave the following assurance when asked whether G.M. also expected to obtain a 20 per cent profit after taxes on new facilities then under construction. "Certainly," he said. "We are investing the stockholders' money in new facilities, and we would certainly expect to make a continuing fair return."

At the same time, Mr. Curtice implied that the higher the rate of profit, the fairer it would seem to him. Asked whether he thought a 30 per cent profit after taxes was too high, Mr. Curtice said: "No, I do not."

One consequence of G.M.'s dominance in the field is that Ford and Chrysler frankly admit that they slavishly price their cars within a few dollars of G.M.'s products—"to compete" as they put it, with G.M. This sometimes results in there not being a dime's worth of difference among the sales prices of G.M., Ford and Chrysler entries in the same fields. The most dramatic instance of such imitation that the Senators found occurred in 1956. At that time, word got around the industry that prices would rise between 5 and 7 per cent on the 1957 models. Ford, however,

announced its prices first, showing general increases from 2 to 9 per cent on its models, ranging from $1 to $104. At this time, Ford said that its increased prices exactly reflected the year's increase in "our actual costs for materials and labor."

But two weeks later, G.M. announced its Chevrolet prices, reflecting an average increase of 6.1 per cent over 1956 model prices, ranging from $50 to $166 higher per car.

Ford waited one week, then raised its prices to match. The following week, the pattern now clearly set, Chrysler priced its cars, and the result was the usual startling conformity, class by class, of all Big Three cars.

"This is the first time in the history of a free-enterprise economy where a company raised the price of their products in order to be competitive," Walter Reuther sourly remarked, and Mr. Reuther's skepticism was widely shared by the Kefauver subcommittee.

Ford witnesses never satisfactorily answered the Senator's questions as to why they increased the prices to match Chevrolet's, when they had already explained that their first announced price increases were designed simply to cover actual increases in costs. Nor would Ford explain what wisdom led it to match Chevrolet prices in view of the Ford Company's own stated belief that it could "probably" have increased Ford sales if it had stayed with its originally-announced prices. "This is a question of all the factors in a situation you have to take into account," a Fordling said to the Senate.

THE Senate report was careful to say there was no evidence of collusion or conspiracy to rig prices on the part of the Big Three. The testimony indicated the situation just developed because other makers are afraid to enter into a price war with a corporation that could drive them all out of business. Meanwhile, as other manufacturers try to follow G.M.'s prices, sometimes they guess too low when they announce first.

> The evidence suggests [the Senators said] that G. M. has used one of its makes to set the price level, but another to undercut a rival who established a competitive price on the first make. In a sense, this is a case of both eating one's cake and having it, too. For, under this arrangement, G. M. can simultaneously play the role of price leader and also meet or beat price competition where it develops.

The word "competition" is used in the most figurative sense in this regard, inasmuch as prices are seldom

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more than a few dollars apart within each class of Big Three automobiles. It is an even more illusive word as used by Mr. Curtice, who employed it again and again as his excuse for not making facts and figures on G.M.'s manifold operations available to the Senate. Such figures "I do not wish to disclose, for competitive reasons," he said.

And, again and again, Senators found it difficult to imagine what competition Mr. Curtice might have had in mind. The whole testimony presented the picture of G.M. creaming the opposition, forcing its "competitors" to follow along as best they could.

Mr. Curtice was no more enlightening when he used the word with respect to prices within his empire. For instance, he said that price plays an important role in "competition" within G.M.'s divisions. But then he went on to say that he and three other men set the prices for *all* divisions—and that such prices were arranged to bring back that good old 20 per cent on net worth. Senator Kefauver found it difficult to see just how G.M. could possibly imagine that it was involved in any kind of price competition, even within its own family, if the prices were set by Mr. Curtice and three other guys, but good answer came there none at all.

EXPLORING little fiscal jungles without a compass is apt to be mad fun, even for Senators, but the report by no means confined itself to this pursuit.

All in all, the Senate report makes fascinating reading for anyone with a taste for the macabre, explaining, as it does, why General Motors Acceptance Corporation (G.M.'s captive finance company) cannot be enjoined against practicing usury; why the National Automobile Dealers Association guide books to used-car prices favor G.M. cars; why G.M.'s spending of $500 million a year for model changes compels everyone else to follow suit; why G.M. runs up a $94 million advertising bill (and why this is passed on to the hapless consumer); why the prices of all cars will continue to rise no matter whether they are actually improved next year or not, and—finally—why the customer has to hold still for all of this.

The report is most diverting when it demolishes Mr. Curtice's almost Russian insistence that G.M. invented everything; it is most challenging when it suggests that G.M. and other manufacturers could make $200 million more profit if they reduced the prices of their $2,000-cars by $100 each, and $300 million more profit if they reduced them by $200 each. While offering considerable gratuitous advice whereby Detroit could run its business to everyone's increased benefit, the report also indicated why Detroit won't accept such advice.

THROUGH it all, G.M. emerges as the principal villain—damned for its successes, damned for its failures. If today's customer winds up with an overlong, overstuffed, overpowered and overpriced monstrosity, then it's all G.M.'s fault. The Senate's report suggests that the net result of automotive progress is that the customer must spend more for exotic fuels because of the higher-powered, higher compression engine; and more for labor when things break, and more for repairs more often because today's cars are increasingly complex and easier to get out of whack; and more for the increased weight and size of the car, because the bigger engine needs a heavier, more stable platform; and more for power-steering and power-brakes because these are necessary safely to guide and halt the overweight, overpowered car; and more because a bigger company is growing still bigger and is spending more to design a still bigger, still fancier car; and more yet because the company has to spend still more to cozen the customer into buying such a road locomotive. All this is G.M.'s fault, the report indicated, because this is the trend in automotive engineering at G.M., and what to G.M. is a trend, to Ford and Chrysler is a command.

"Any sound economic or financial study of the Big Three together, or G.M. standing alone, results in a finding of monopoly," the subcommittee reported. "However, the theory and factors constituting a monopoly at law would, possibly, produce a different result."

Not only was the subcommittee undisturbed that their complaints and suspicions might not add up to a lawsuit, but they were even less disturbed by their failure to find legal evidence of collusion or conspiracy among the manufacturers, nor—for that matter—of any evidence of wrongdoing by G.M. specifically. Instead, their report was simply an article of faith, of belief:

> The subcommittee believes that the hard core of the monopoly problem in the automobile industry is the concentration of production and power held by G. M. This concentration appears neither compatible with nor conducive to a free market in which the public must buy automobiles.

Thus, typical of the report are statements like these: "Therefore, G.M.: . . . *may be* restricting dealers. . . ."; "This *very well may be* a violation of. . . ."; "G.M. *could be* practicing the squeeze. . . ."; "*Without alleging* that G.M. has attempted to monopolize raw materials . . . the automobile . . . company . . . *may have* misused its power. . . ."; and—finally—the subcommittee used the wonderful phrase,". . . *at least affords indications that*. . . ." (Italics added.)

In sum, the Senatorial report merely concludes that G.M. couldn't possibly be so big without being somehow bad; that if the effect of G.M.'s success was to have created a monopoly, then it doesn't matter whether that monopoly was created by fair means or foul—it will have to be destroyed. Lacking legal evidence, the report uses the language of belief in its own suspicions. The subcommittee concluded:

> In the general context of trying to preserve competition and prevent monopoly, it would appear appropriate that the Department of Justice consider . . . a thorough investigation, and, if justified, a case under Section Two of the Sherman Act against the dominant economic force [G. M.] in the industry.

In other words, we have a cry from the heart: Won't somebody, somewhere, somehow, please do something?

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BOMB PERIL

MESSAGE from a SMALL POWER . . *by Frank Aiken*

The writer of the following article is Minister for External Affairs of Ireland. He has played an important role at the current session of the General Assembly as ex officio *spokesman for many of the smaller member nations.*

United Nations

ON OCTOBER 31, the U.N. Political Committee placed itself on record, by a vote of 37 for, 44 abstentions and none against, as recognizing

> . . . That the danger now exists that an increase in the number of states possessing nuclear weapons may occur, aggravating international tension and the difficulty of maintaining world peace and thus rendering more difficult the attainment of general disarmament.

This recognition followed a long disarmament debate in which the specific issue of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons, introduced by the Irish delegation, was discussed by many member nations. Most of these, and notably Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Burma, Sweden and Norway, recognized the reality and gravity of the danger. Its nature was defined very succinctly by the Australian delegate, Dr. Ronald Walker, when he said: "If the manufacture and possession of nuclear arms becomes widely diffused throughout the world, the negotiation, let alone the implementation, of an effective disarmament agreement might well become impossible."

This discussion was notable as being the first of its kind in the United Nations. Hitherto, in the annual disarmament debate, discussion has concentrated on the question of reducing the nuclear—and other—armaments of the present nuclear powers. The question of the wider dissemination of these weapons was alluded to only rarely and in passing, under the title of "the fourth-power danger"—a term which is already obsolete.

The fact that the problem was recognized this year, in the remarks of so many speakers and by vote of the committee, does mark therefore an advance in the evolution of public opinion on this subject. The Irish delegation felt that its initiative in drawing attention to this particular aspect of the disarmament problem justified itself by having placed on record the considered and cautionary opinion of the Political Committee —an opinion which we trust will influence nuclear powers not to *give* "the bomb" and the non-nuclear powers not to *make* it.

It would be wrong to pretend, however, that this "recognition of the danger" is all we set out to accomplish, and wrong not to call attention to the urgent necessity for widespread support for the principle of non-dissemination of nuclear weapons if the danger inherent in such dissemination is to be eliminated. Our original hope was that the committee, and later the General Assembly, would clearly and specifically resolve to urge those member states which do not now possess nuclear weapons to refrain from acquiring them, and to urge those states which do now possess them to refrain from handing them over to the non-nuclear states. Our argument was as follows.

THE DANGER of nuclear weapons to humanity, we argued, does not merely increase in direct ratio to the number of those possessing them. It seems likely to increase in geometric progression. Those who now possess nuclear weapons are a few great and highly developed states, with great urban populations, with much to lose and little to gain in a nuclear war. Their potential adversaries are in the same situation and have the power to retaliate. As in the case of every other military invention, however, the harnessing of nuclear energy for military purposes is bound to become simpler and cheaper with the passing of time. Sooner or later, therefore, failing action by the United Nations, this weapon will pass into the hands of states with much less to lose. Furthermore, as it comes into their hands, it may give them a temporary but enormous advantage over their adversaries—an advantage which they will be sorely tempted to exploit.

There are several regions of the world where fierce antagonisms exist, held in suspense only by a kind of truce or deadlock. That deadlock could be broken all too easily, if one side or the other possessed nuclear weapons. In short, the nuclear stalemate ceases to apply once nuclear weapons begin to come into the hands of the smaller countries. Furthermore, nothing except international measures to prevent the dissemination of such weapons can prevent them from coming, ultimately, not merely to small and poor states, but also to revolutionary organizations. All through history, portable weapons which are the monopoly of the great powers today become the weapons of smaller powers and revolutionary groups tomorrow. And since local wars and revolutions almost always involve some degree of Great Power patronage and rivalry, the use of nuclear weapons by a small state or revolutionary group could lead, only too easily, to the outbreak of general war. One obsolete, Hiroshima-type bomb, used by a small and desperate country to settle a local quarrel, could be the detonator for world-wide thermonuclear war, involving the destruction of our civilization.

THERE WAS, as I have indicated, a general recognition by the Political Committee of the reality of these dangers. Division of opinion existed, however, as to whether any action could or should be taken to combat them. During the eight weeks before the vote we had many discussions with various delegates on our proposals. The criticisms we had to meet were in the main variants of the following three objections:

First, that by establishing, even temporarily, two categories of member states—nuclear "haves" and "have-nots"—the amendments we

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proposed infringed in theory the principle of the sovereign equality of nations and reduced in practice the prestige of the "have-not" nations.

Second, that by limiting freedom of action in the disposal of nuclear weapons, the proposals might impair the effectiveness of the various systems of defensive alliances to which many member states belong

Third, that since the presence of nuclear weapons is virtually impossible to detect, it would be impossible to control compliance with the obligations here envisaged—and particularly compliance with the requirement that states which possess nuclear weapons should not hand them over to non-nuclear states.

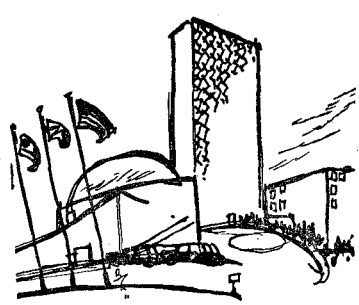
THE FIRST objection, as might be expected, was put forward by some representatives of smaller and medium states who tended to resent the perpetuation, as they considered it, of what the delegate of Spain, Señor de Lequerica, called "the clique of atomic aristocrats." To this our reply was that we aimed, not at perpetuating the existing situation, but at preventing its deterioration. If the Assembly were able to check the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons, it would not be rendering any more difficult the fundamental problem of abolishing nuclear weapons altogether, within the framework of an effective, balanced, disarmament agreement. On the contrary, failure to check wider dissemination might well render all disarmament, including Great Power disarmament, quite unattainable. It is worth noting that, although some representatives of the smaller and middle powers did raise this objection, the majority of those in that category who spoke gave support to our ideas.

The second and third objections—limiting freedom of action, and the difficulty of inspection—are closely interrelated. The danger envisaged by those who make these objections is approximately this: Suppose that all the nuclear powers bind themselves not to hand over nuclear weapons to their non-nuclear allies. Some powers faithfully abide by this undertaking, and their allies are deprived of these modern weapons. Another power does not abide by this undertaking, but secretly supplies its allies with these weapons. As no certain means of detecting such supply exists, the result is that the power which is in bad faith has obtained a covert advantage over those which are in good faith.

This was really the crucial objection to our proposals in their original form. Those proposals were put forward in the form of amendments to the United States resolution on test suspension and Ambassador Lodge, in indicating that he could not accept them, referred to the difficulty of effective inspection and control. Rather than divide the committee in a manner which would have been harmful rather than helpful to the principles which we were trying to establish, we withdrew our amendments and concentrated, for the time being, on securing the "recognition of the danger" to which I referred at the beginning of this article.

IN VIEW OF the importance which the question of inspection and control possesses in this context, we devoted a considerable part of our argument to a consideration of this question.

We pointed out that an important part of our proposal — that which would ask the present non-nuclear states to refrain from producing these weapons — was in fact capable of effective inspection and control. It is agreed by experts on the subject that diversion of nuclear production from peaceful purposes is capable of detection, under a comparatively simple inspection system. Such an inspection system, set up in countries agreeing not to produce nuclear weapons, could not only serve to guarantee non-production there, but could serve also as a pilot scheme for working out techniques which would be applied in the more difficult case of the hoped-for cessation of production by the present nuclear powers themselves.



As regards the second and no less important aspect of the proposals—agreement by the nuclear powers not to transfer the weapons to the control of present non-nuclear countries—we agreed that here international inspection and control probably cannot be made 100 per cent effective with existing techniques. Any risk involved, however, is very small in comparison with the enormous risks involved in the free and unhindered dissemination of nuclear weapons.

The best guarantee that such an agreement would be kept is that it is self-enforcing, in that it would be in the interest of the nuclear powers, generally and collectively, to keep it.

In defending our proposals, on the last night of the disarmament debate in the committee, I concluded with these words:

> Seldom if ever, in our belief, has a proposed international agreement been in such obvious conformity with the mutual interests of the signatories. As history shows, it is such agreements, rather than those equipped with the most elaborate safeguards, which tend to be kept. None of the nuclear powers has anything to gain by a transfer of these weapons which would counterbalance *both* the sacrifice of a considerable part of its own power *and* the creation of a situation in which disarmament would become impossible and general war more likely.
>
> And, on the other side, in what does the risk consist? Is it in the possibility that one party to the agreement would, in breach of it, and secretly, transfer the weapon to another country? In terms of the general situation, the risk of such a transfer exists already. . . . What would be created by the agreement is a limited specific risk for the complying party, who would have foregone whatever advantage might reside in such a transfer, while his rival, in bad faith, obtained that advantage. That is the whole extent of the risk. Remember that both parties would be free—pending a general agreement on disarmament—to hold

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nuclear weapons anywhere, on allied territory, they wished to hold them. The supposed advantage which might be sacrified would be that of handing over these weapons into the ownership or control of an ally. I submit that the potential loss of this supposed advantage is scarcely worthy of being described as a risk. It is more in the nature of a hypothetical military inconvenience. . . .

In the entangled dangers of today the progress, and indeed even the survival, of our civilization require initiatives from the Great Powers which only they can take and which no one can force them to take. . . .

I suggest that one of these initiatives should be an agreement between them that they will bind themselves voluntarily to abstain from distributing nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states.

I suggest that the non-nuclear powers should complement this decision by undertaking to abstain from production of these weapons. . . .

IT IS OUR belief that this question of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons is one on which world public opinion must be concentrated in the months to come, lest the spread of these weapons becomes uncontrollable. We believe that the discussions in the Political Committee during this session have helped to start such a movement of public opinion in many countries.

Mankind is surrounded by risks whichever way we turn. But we must not allow ourselves to be hypnotized, by the prospect of the risks which must be taken to secure peace, into frozen and despairing inactivity on the iceberg of the cold war now drifting inexorably towards the area in which there is no peace and no victory.

The world cannot get out of the present entangled situation unless all nations, nuclear and non-nuclear, accept the necessity to take risks in order to win stable peace based on law, as the necessity to take risks is accepted in war to secure military victory.

LEARNING to be a TYCOON . . *by Andrew Hacker*

JOHN MARQUAND had George Apley call the Harvard business school "one of the most damnable examples of the materialism which we face." But Marquand made sure that Willis Wayde, before entering the world of business, got his M.B.A. from that institution. An Apley could afford to sneer at business education; his career was ready-made for him and personal success was all but guaranteed. The Waydes are provided with no such built-in escalator. A business education at least offers them a start in a field where the participants are never sure of what they themselves have to offer, or of what will be demanded of them.

The passing of Apley and the arrival of the Waydes on the American business scene has contributed more than anything else to the rise in status of business education. Young men (and women) increasingly feel the need of explicit classroom preparation before they go out to earn a living. In doing this, they are making certain assumptions — some valid, some mythical — about the value of such training. There are other assumptions which guide the deans and professors who preside over our business schools. It would be well, therefore, to take a hard look at the ways in which links are being forged between higher education and the business community.

Today, 185 colleges and universities offer business training, of which more than a hundred award graduate degrees. There are currently more than 250,000 students in business programs, one-eighth of the total enrollment in all institutions of higher learning. By 1970, it is estimated, there will be 620,000 business students; most business deans think that their proportionate share of the total number of students in higher education will increase. To quantity, we are told, is added quality. The American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business does not allow its eighty-one member schools to give business courses exclusively; a strong dose of liberal arts is required. Business education, we hear, is itself liberal: to accounting, marketing and the traditional specialties are added the study of human relations, the science of management and business statesmanship. Business, we are led to conclude, is a profession. Business education is professional training.

On paper it looks good. But what is described is more aspiration than reality. Despite the fact that, in 1956, 258,995 students were in business programs throughout the country, only 4,727 degrees at the master's level were awarded. In the 105 schools offering graduate degrees, the total graduate enrollment amounted to 21,884 — less than 10 per cent of all business students. Business education is still, in the large, undergraduate instruction.

WHAT IT comes down to is that only a handful of institutions provide the conditions under which serious business education can be carried on: Carnegie Tech, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard and Stanford. They are the only institutions in the country at which exclusively graduate training in business is available. These six had a total enrollment of only 3,911 at last count. Nevertheless, they are worthy of our attention. They provide a good proportion of the teachers who join business-school faculties in the hinterland. They are the models, moreover, which it is hoped other schools will copy up and down the

ANDREW HACKER teaches in the Department of Government at Cornell University. Mr. Hacker here deals with graduate business schools. In an article to be published shortly, The Nation *will deal with a related problem: how corporations attempt to graft a liberal education on their non-college-graduate executives.*

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land. In this respect, Harvard is — sometimes grudgingly — conceded to be the primary standard bearer.

What is taught in these business schools? Catalogues alone do not give the answer; what is imparted in the classrooms is far less important than the overall atmosphere surrounding the students. "The typical graduate student comes directly from college," Peter Drucker says. "He has never lived as an adult in an adult world." Can the graduate schools of business turn such a youngster into a businessman? The answer is that at least they try. Harvard's famous "Ad Prac" (course in administrative practices) seeks to introduce students to the realities of business relationships. Emulating the law schools, Harvard has built up a file of 25,000 case studies, the purpose of which is to throw the students into actual situations. Classes are presented with real problems of production, marketing and labor relations. What, the professor asks, would you do in a case like this? The student must become a foreman or a manager, and solve the problem himself. Abstractions are eschewed; theory grows out of practice. Harvard is now experimenting with case-study films; scowling faces, tense voices and background clatter will bring the factory even further into the classroom.

Can techniques be taught in this way? The consensus seems to be that if techniques can be taught at all in the classroom, this is the best method. However, business education cannot be built wholly on a hypothesis. Therefore the schools do offer standard courses such as accounting, advertising and time-study, so that graduates will leave with at least one or two specialized skills. On the other hand, the graduate schools realize that such essays in vocationalism can be carried out just as well in less august surroundings — in undergraduate colleges and night schools, for instance. They rely, therefore, on the idea that above all else they are training leaders — leaders of men, leaders of society.

Education for leadership perplexed Plato: his solution was to create a Utopia. Business educators frequently make Utopian speeches and they probably have Platonic dreams at night. However, in this world they must deliver the goods, and to this end they apply themselves. The job of turning a college boy into a businessman takes, first of all, time. All too obvious a consequence of graduate study in business is that it allows a lad of twenty-one to turn into a man of twenty-three. For some reason or other, business firms are willing to give far more responsibility to a twenty-three-year-old than they are to a man two years younger. During this aging process, however, the graduate student — unlike a cheese — must be kept busy. The graduate business school gives him more work, in terms of sheer time-consumption, than he ever got as an undergraduate. He reads case studies; he writes reports on them; he puzzles out balance sheets. Much of the work is repetitive or irrelevant; but no matter. The point is that the business student must work hard because he must be brought to believe that he is embarked on a serious career. The theory seems to be that the harder the student works, the more likely he will feel that there is much to learn.

AT THE SAME time, the faculty quietly builds student self-confidence. The students are told: "You are the crown princes of American industry. You, no one else, will provide the leadership for our economy. You are rational. You are responsible. You are professional men." Students finally come to believe these propositions. Why not? The whole atmosphere of the business school conspires to strengthen the ego of future managers. For example, periodic conferences for businessmen are held on the campuses; the visitors, successful men all, are seen by and mingle with the students, who get the impression that they are already members of the business community.

Another instance of ego-development is to be found in the teaching of the "human relations" courses. First projected by the late Elton Mayo of Harvard, this technique for training leaders has spread to most graduate business schools. The core idea is that to be effective, a manager must understand the irrational sentiments which motivate the bulk of employee-behavior. Business students are told that they must be amateur psychoanalysts: they are taught to listen to their employee complaints with a "third ear." Lying beneath gripes about low wages, for example, there may be deep-seated cravings for social acceptance and psychological recognition. If these real, though unarticulated, human needs are satisfied, labor-relations problems will all but evaporate.

This, at least, is the theory. Of course, the assumption throughout is that only the employees, never management, are swayed by irrational sentiments. Such a premise is hardly a strong one to begin with; but its validity is really beside the point. What is important is that a manager in industry holds a position of power and authority. When he gives an order, it is obeyed. And it is obeyed because business has no pretensions about being democratic. What a "human relations" approach does is merely to follow the lesson of experience, which teaches that speaking softly — and listening empathetically — is usually more productive than wielding a big stick.

Just as Machiavelli only advised men who had already become princes, so the business schools teach how best to exercise the power which is already inherent in the management class for which their students are destined. The schools do not give the students a magic cloak of leadership; that can only be provided by the company (a fact rarely spoken of in business-school classrooms). But the schools can tell their pupils how to wear the cloak to best advantage.

THE WHARTON SCHOOL at the University of Pennsylvania was founded in 1881. Harvard's School of Business is a half-century old this year. Few institutions can exist this long without beginning to wax theoretical. The business school, we are told, has to provide "professional leadership" in modern enterprise and the modern industrial society. The meaning of this proposition is not

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entirely clear. It ought to be obvious that businessmen fit the requisites for professionalism only in the loosest way. Unlike those who are called to the bar, the military, the clergy and medicine, they are not self-governing, nor do they have a core of ethics, nor do they have an "expertise" which they themselves impart to those who would enter the profession.

Nevertheless, the business schools persist in talking as if they offered professional training. Fifty years ago the businessman did not worry about professionalism; he earned the esteem of society by taking risks, by being his own boss, and by building a personal fortune. The business schools of today do not train entrepreneurs: they would not know how even if they wanted to. They graduate organization men. Many business educators regard this as a retreat; but it is a retreat which must be covered up. Consciences are salved, a modicum of public respect is won, by the term "professional" organization men.

Young men who have just received their B.A. realize that a graduate business education is a good investment. The liberal-arts major finds that corporations are cool to his applications for employment. The jobs which are available yield low pay, especially compared with those offered to engineers and scientists. In contrast, the product of a graduate business school is much sought after by the large corporations. He will draw at least $5,000 in his first year on the job; Harvard graduates average $6,250 at the beginning.

Yet it is not entirely clear what the advantages are over and above initial employment opportunities. One business school dean told *Business Week*: "It's getting to be a matter of pride with companies to have a few business-school people around." Whether the corporate view of business education extends further than that is problematical. Let us suppose that two students graduated from a liberal-arts college in June of 1956. One managed to get a job with du Pont; the other spent two years at a business school and joined du Pont in June, 1958. Assuming equal native abilities, can we say that in ten (or thirty) years the business-school man will be a better manager — and be so recognized in terms of salary and responsibility — than his liberal-arts classmate? The business schools shy away from questions like this. No studies have been made: the results would probably be disillusioning.

A PARTIAL answer lies in some of the recent surveys of the educational backgrounds of businessmen in America. W. Lloyd Warner and James C. Abegglen, in preparation for their study on *Occupational Mobility*, sent questionnaires to 7,484 business leaders. Of these, only 1,610 (22 per cent) had taken business courses in college or university. Herrymon Maurer, reporting on 833 top executives in *Fortune*, found that no more than 162 (19 per cent) named business or economics to have been their main educational interest. (In neither of these studies are we told how many of those interviewed had simply taken some undergraduate courses in accounting, and how many had attended graduate business schools.) Mabel Newcomer, in *The Big Business Executive*, reports that of the 863 executives she studied, only thirteen (1.5 per cent) were products of the Harvard Business School. These studies tell us, at least, that younger executives — tomorrow's top men — are better educated than the older men and that businessmen who have done postgraduate work are on the increase. Yet it is apparent that, in most cases, the advanced study was not in business but in law, science and engineering. The evidence, such as it is, is that graduate business schools have yet to provide a significant number of top business leaders. The truth may finally be that while a business degree can get your first job in middle-management, its effect is relatively inconsequential when it comes to selection for the higher echelons.

Today, more than ever before, the small group of men who fill most of the positions of real power in industry are men of genuine talent. The barriers to executive recruitment which were based on class and ethnic background are rapidly breaking down. A business degree, in the final analysis, will neither help nor hinder a man tabbed for a high position. He will be judged and selected on the basis of personality and skills — qualities which a business school is equipped neither to instill nor to bring out. Nor are the men in the executive suites inclined to be influenced by the talk of professionalism which goes on at the business schools. Business deans quote Alfred North Whitehead, and ask our business leaders to "think greatly" of their calling. The new men who run our corporations know only how to think greatly within the circumscribed universe of the problems which directly face their own companies. Guided by profit-and-loss statements, public-relations shibboleths, and an almost pathological desire to avoid controversy, they end up in no position to apply their corporate power to a serious confrontation of social questions.

The rhetoric and the ritual which surround business education may seem harmless in itself; nevertheless, a good many people are beginning to take it seriously — and ideas do not have to be valid in order to have influence. Furthermore, it is true that business-school graduates — and non-graduates who are not unsympathetic to business-school ideas — stand a good chance of being the source of supply for a high proportion of the next generation's corporate managers. Should this be the case, the American economy may begin to bear the imprint of an ideology which is a radical departure from our traditional business creed.

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WARM SIDE of the COLD WAR . . *by Lee J. Michaels*

Heidelberg, Germany

IN SOME WAYS, the most pampered people in the free world today are the 500,000 American servicemen and family members serving in Europe and North Africa. They are coddled beyond the wildest dreams of the advocates of a Socialist state.

It is impossible to compute what all the coddling costs the average American in tax bites each year, but the figure runs into tens of millions of dollars and some believe even beyond that.

Gasoline at 15 cents a gallon, the latest movie for 25 cents, a full gallon of top-quality strawberry jam for 75 cents, bread at 10 cents a loaf, milk at 11 cents a quart, a radio station featuring all the top American shows but with no commercials, cigarettes at 11 cents a package, a daily advertisement-free newspaper produced at a cost of 8 cents but sold for a nickel—these are just a few of the benefits on which the government sees fit to spend the tax dollar in providing for the serviceman stationed in Europe or North Africa.

Add to these facts the knowledge that the products are carried across the Atlantic in a government ship, that they are sold in stores operated almost completely at government expense, and that table leftovers go into government-owned garbage cans to be emptied by government-paid trash haulers, and the picture begins to come into focus.

THE basement holding the garbage is built under a government-provided and government-furnished home. The less than $100 the military man would get as a housing allowance were he stationed in the United States has here been forfeited for a modern and completely equipped apartment. The furnishings provided at taxpayers' expense include everything down to blankets, kitchen utensils, expensive glassware and silverware sets—and a cabinet containing ninety-six pieces of the world famous Rosenthal china. Doting mothers needn't worry about punishing little Susie for dropping a dish or glass, either—15 per cent breakage is replaced free of charge each year by a thoughtful Uncle Sam.

Utilities are furnished and there's no worry about the size of a coal bill or what will happen to the family budget if the lights are left burning all night every night.

These modern homes—built specifically for the American military in the past eight years—are always in the shadow of the 25-cents-a-seat theatres, 20-cents-a-game bowling alleys, excellent libraries, modern shopping centers and—most important of all to the military man—a night club, equal to the finest in most American cities, where the most expensive drink in the house will put only 25 cents in the cash register. Famous beers shipped from Scandanavia and Holland sell for 15 cents a bottle and a one-and-a-half-pound T-bone steak dinner (the best Irish beef) is served by a tuxedo-clad waiter and his entourage for $1. Even so, prices permit enough of a profit for the club to offer nightly entertainment in the form of a dance band plus top European floor shows which play a complete military circuit at all times.

If all the military man and his wife want is a drink in the comfort of their living room, they can buy the same famous imported beer for five cents a bottle. If alcoholic tastes run to something stronger, the best scotch is available at less than $2 for an imperial quart. Or, if scotch is too rich for the blood, good, old-fashioned American whiskey can be had for 95 cents a fifth. Uncle Sam's Navy is kind enough to carry the whiskey to Europe for these Americans isolated in the middle of France's cognac country, living next to a gin distillery in England, or just thirsty for a good Yankee highball after all that German beer, wine and *schnapps*.

Although the military establishments contend that most of these "bargains" are possible only because they are tax-free, the government actually is underwriting every brick along this gold-paved road. The "business-like" enterprises conducted by the military do not pay rent, and receive *all* utilities free. Almost all of the personnel involved are paid out of the Defense Department's Military Personnel budget. All of the items sold in post exchanges and commissaries (military grocery stores operating for the military family) are transported to Europe on government ships and cleared through European customs by military men—and not a cent of this cost is reflected in the final sale price of the individual item. There is probably not a retail store in the United States that could not trim prices by 40 per cent or more if the owner did not have to pay taxes, rent, utilities, salaries beyond that of a cashier—or meet an advertising budget.

The undisputed high mark of the overseas benefit program comes in the form of vacation centers operated for the use of military men and their families.

Located at the 1936 Olympic site of Garmisch and the famed Hitler-era retreat of Berchtesgaden, these centers offer some of the Alps's finer facilities for summer and winter sports. Hotel rooms—comparable to those available in swank St. Moritz—cost $1.00 a day; and all of the entertainment advantages of the world's plushest resorts are available at prices that would strain the ability of anyone to spend more than $5.00 daily on food, drink and entertainment.

THE coddling is extended into unexpected fields. Here in Germany, where it has been charged that American soldiers and airmen annually father an estimated 20,000 illegitimate children, a German-American agreement protects the serviceman-father and he cannot be made to pay for the support of a child unless he volunteers to do so.

The story is different in France, England, Italy and North Africa, where a military man is subject to

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LEE J. MICHAELS, an American free-lance writer, has been observing his countrymen in Europe for eight years.

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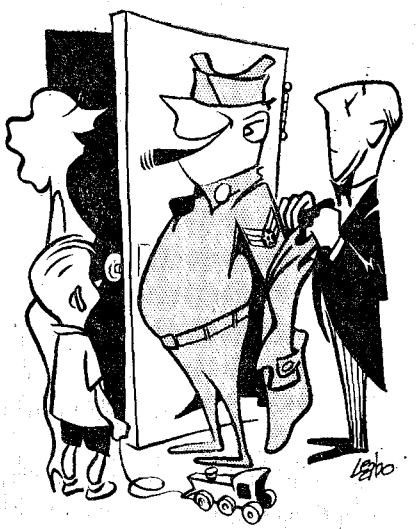
the laws of the land. But in these countries the military neatly gets around paternity-type suits by transferring a man out of the country when civil paternity suits are slated. This is the result of a "gentleman's agreement" among American commanders.

If the effect of this protective coddling is to encourage extra-marital relationships, it works also to discourage men from marrying. To marry a European girl, the soldier or airman must have the approval of his commanding officer. This approval must conform to a carefully spelled-out set of rules which insists upon a morals, health and criminal-record check on the girl. A chaplain, unit commander or military police official can turn thumbs down on a marriage, and if the man defies the ruling, he is liable to a trial by court-martial. Even if he does get the necessary approval, there is a chance that the wife will not be admitted to the United States. The loophole in the procedures aimed at protecting military men is causing grief for dozens of military men who have married European girls, fathered one or more children, lived in housing provided by the military and prepared for return to the United States, only to learn that the State Department will not grant the European wife a visa. The men are then faced with a choice of leaving their families in Europe or leaving military service and living permanently in Europe.

A CONSTANT education campaign is waged to keep servicemen from drinking any milk or water that has not been tested or procured by the military. U.S. authorities in West Germany are installing special chloridation systems, at a cost of almost $100,000 each, in scores of American housing areas because Germans object to the excessive amount of chlorine poured into their civic water systems by the Americans.

Milk bought in most European stores does not meet U.S. military tuberculin standards, and all Americans are constantly warned that they are not to have anything to do with any product made from milk. European medical experts agree in this instance. But the same experts—from noted medical institutions at Heidelberg, Paris and other leading centers—disagree on some of the other warnings constantly thrown at the Americans by the military. A sterilization process for all vegetables and fruits is ridiculous, they contend. If the code of purity standards for food demanded by military medics were followed, there are not more than a dozen restaurants in all of Europe where an American could have a meal with complete peace of mind.

Summer fun is a problem for the American overseas, too. During this past summer fewer than fifty swimming pools in all of Europe were approved for use by military men. The



remainder of the more than 50,000 pools, lakes and beach areas in the American area of influence were "Off-Limits" and a man could be fined or tossed in jail for using them. Pool owners in Germany attempted to operate their pools according to military standards, but soon realized that the high chlorine content required was driving away most customers, including the military.

THE CODDLING is by no means all physical. It may be that the anti-missile missile has not yet been perfected; anti-*thought* techniques, as developed for the serviceman abroad, have been brought to a high stage of efficiency.

The *Stars and Stripes*, a 120,000-circulation newspaper which is a government monopoly, is thoroughly censored by military officials. Stories that will point out faults of the military operation in Europe—often even in other areas—must be okayed by the Army's European headquarters at Heidelberg or the Air Force's Pentagon in Wiesbaden before they can be printed—and often they never see ink. The American Forces Network radio stations operate under similar censorship rules.

Only books and magazines that are approved as suitable for the military man are sold on the military-controlled newsstands. The screening board consists of a half-dozen top-ranking military men who turn thumbs down on an estimated 40 per cent of the magazines on sale at any corner newsstand in the United States. As for the book department, one colonel on the censorship board recently remarked that, if the board listened to all of the complaints passed along by high brass, only two books would be on sale—the Bible and the dictionary. "And the chaplains would object to the dictionary," he added.

Motion pictures are not outside the realm of the censor, either. Although military officials insist that the only pictures not shown on the 25-cents-a-seat circuit, embracing over 500 theatres, are those which are listed as unsuitable by the U.S. Code of Decency, dozens of top films not included in the "black list" are never shipped to Europe.

When questioned on this, officials in Europe say that films are selected in the United States. At the Pentagon, however, officials of the Army and Air Force Motion Picture Service responsible for the procurement of movies say that officials in Europe do not want anything that might endanger the morale of the military man and his family serving in an overseas area, and that overseas commanders and their staffs can refuse any motion picture they do not like.

Although subsidies paid for by the taxpayers make him one of the best cared-for American citizens, the soldier or sailor stationed abroad strongly resents the protective coddling of his private life. If it weren't for the $2 scotch, things would be very tough, indeed.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

'You Mustn't Say Things Like That'

Walker Gibson

EVEN though clichés, dead metaphors and triteness have always been inseparable from any use of words, our present-day self-conscious anxiety about these matters is extraordinary. Alarm over the flatness of contemporary language has penetrated to the very journalism that flattened it: thus a recent issue of *The New York Times Magazine* features Mr. Bergen Evans, professor of English and TV expert, in a rousing attack on clichés. Clichés, he says in his opening sentence, flourish "like crab grass on our lawns," and he goes on:

> The *torrent* of printed and broadcast wordage that is *dumped* over us every day exceeds all possibility of fresh supply. The happiest day in the history of the language never produced one-thousandth of what the press and radio and television *pour out* every hour. And since most of this stuff is prepared in furious haste, it is bound to be repetitious, *woven* of the *worn* phrases that come to jaded minds. . . .

Mr. Evans urges us to use a phrase "with a full awareness of its exact meaning and shopworn state." "When the writer or speaker has his metaphor vividly in mind, he isn't using a cliché." This is good advice, but it would have been more convincing if Mr. Evans had been able to follow it. The reader who hesitates over that first metaphor I have italicized may want to ask himself whether one can in fact dump a torrent, but if he wades on regardless, it is to encounter some pretty muddy going. "What the press and radio and television *pour out*," Mr. Evans tells us, is "*woven* of the *worn* phrases that come to jaded minds." Talk about exact meanings and shopworn states! (Many clichés, Mr. Evans points out, are alliterative.)

The spectacle of an expert on language misusing language in an article on the misuse of language may be an indication of the state things have got to. But the fact is, it is extremely difficult to attack clichés directly, in the wholesome and forthright manner of Mr. Evans. If one is to speak soberly in expository prose about these things, one's solemn face is sure to utter some absurdly solemn and pretentious phrases, and one's metaphors are certain to look shopworn. Instead, the attack on clichés is more effectually carried on by another sort of voice altogether — the voice of the poet, perhaps, or of the comedian.

One reason Kingsley Amis' comic novel, *Lucky Jim*, enjoyed such favor among intellectuals a few years ago (and has now been re-issued in paper[1]) was that its protagonist, a sensitive and clever fellow even as you and I, knew himself to be caught in a vast mush of bad language. Jim Dixon spends his days making covert faces at windy talk; he is a barometer of hot air. "I'm the boredom detector," he says. "I'm a finely tuned instrument. If only I could get hold of a millionaire I'd be worth a bag of money to him. He could send me on ahead into dinners and cocktail parties and night clubs, just for five minutes, and then by looking at me he'd be able to read off the boredom coefficient of any gathering. Like a canary down a mine; same idea."

Lucky Jim is constructed around a series of episodes in which its hero quivers at verbal claptrap, his own and others'. He suffers from the melodramatic clichés of Margaret, his academic-priggish girl friend:

> At his side, Margaret heaved the sigh which invariably preceded the worst avowals. She waited until he had to look at her and said: "How close we seem to be tonight, James." A fat-faced man on the other side of her turned and stared at her. "All the barriers are down at last, aren't they?" she asked.
>
> Finding this unanswerable, Dixon gazed at her, slowly nodding his head, half expecting a round of applause from some invisible auditorium. What wouldn't he give for a fierce purging draught of fury or contempt, a really efficient worming from the sense of responsibility?

Jim gets his chance for a worming when he is delegated to give a public lecture, on "Merrie England," at the college where he teaches. Painfully he prepares this speech, all too aware of its bilginess:

> "In that way we shall be saying a word, however small in its individual effect, for our native tradition, for our common heritage, in short, for what we once had and may, some day, have again — Merrie England."
>
> With a long jabbering belch, Dixon got up from the chair where he'd been writing this and did his ape imitation all around the room.

The night of the speech arrives, and Jim, inspired by drink, finally finds a bizarre way of uttering these anemic phrases while at the same time expressing his opinion of them:

> Gradually, but not as gradually as it seemed to some parts of his brain, he began to infuse his tones with a sarcastic, wounding bitterness. Nobody outside a madhouse, he tried to imply, could take seriously a single phrase of this conjectural, nugatory, deluded, tedious, rubbish. Within quite a short time he was contriving to sound like an unusually fanatical nazi trooper in charge of a book-burning reading out to the crowd excerpts from a pamphlet written by a pacifist, Jewish, literate communist.

It isn't often, however, in the course of Jim's adventures, that he can find anything affirmative to say. When Margaret is murmuring to him things like "Do you think it's wise for us to go round together like this?" and "I'm getting much too fond of you," Dixon can feel only panic, until "he hit on a remark both honest and acceptable: 'You mustn't say things like that.'"

THE publication last month of *The Most of S. J. Perelman*[2], should remind readers that we have in our own country a comic writer who has been carrying on a consistent and eloquent attack on dead language since about the time Mr. Amis was born. Perelman has been quoted to the effect that Joyce is the greatest comic writer of our time, and that observation helps to suggest the particular quality of his own humor. It is a humor, richly represented in this

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[1] Viking Press. $1.25.

[2] Simon & Schuster, Inc. $5.95.

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handsome collection, that depends on the strictest sensitivity to the corniness of contemporary public language, laced (as he would say) with wild juxtapositions of traditional literary glop. The effect is somewhat as if Joyce had been, as Perelman *has* been, a writer for Hollywood and gagman for Groucho Marx. Admirers of Joyce will want to point out a few differences — that Perelman never wrote a great novel hundreds of pages long, for instance. In fact some of Perelman's six-page sketches are too long already, and there is rarely any development out of the given situation of madness, fairly simply defined. Still, the madness is certainly given, and nowhere more fantastically than in the piece called "Scenario":

> Gentlemen, I give you Martha Custis, hetman of the Don Cossacks, her features etched with the fragile beauty of a cameo. And I walked right in on her before she had a chance to pull the god-damned kimono together. But to be away from all this — . . . Tired, Roy, I'm tired, I tell you. Tired of the rain, the eternal surge of the breakers on that lagoon, the glitter of the reef. . . .

Hollywood gobbledegook with its pale echo of trite literary styles is exactly right for the expression of Perelman's particular vision. Not only can he "fade" from one all-too-familiar backdrop to another, skipping about in time and space, but the fakery of these phrases can be held up against another kind of vulgarity, the "real" voices of the movie operatives at their business:

> I ask you confidentially, Horowitz, can't we get that dame to put on some women's clothes, a skirt or something? The fans are getting wise, all those flat-heeled shoes and men's shirts like a lumberjack. Get me Gerber in publicity, he'll dish out some crap about her happy home life. . . . Shoot it two ways, you can always dub it in the sound track. She shrieks or she don't shriek, what the hell difference does it make?

All these sentences, of course, are enclosed in unwritten quotation marks; indeed, in Perelman's world, there is very rarely anything except words in quotation. Usually the author's own voice never appears; nothing is said straight. This gives an effect, sometimes, of a kind of nightmare, where images bombard us without form, without the controlling authority of a narrator's presence. (A nightmare is like a work of fiction without an author.) But reading Perelman is finally not like having a bad dream at all, because he is usually very funny, and because we know that behind the madness there is an active intelligence with a most sensitive ear for the banal and the phony.

When in Perelman's work an "I" is dramatized and a narrator's voice actually appears, it is a highly stylized character indeed:

> I guess I'm just an old mad scientist at bottom. Give me an underground laboratory, half a dozen atom-smashers, and a beautiful girl in a diaphanous veil waiting to be turned into a chimpanzee, and I care not who writes the nation's laws.

Often this character displays a peculiarity that is very precisely one its creator does *not* share: an amazing naïveté about language. The narrator in some of Perelman's pieces (particularly his early ones) is a fellow who really believes what he says — and nobody in his right mind does that. This is a fellow who, when he uses a metaphor, not only doesn't realize that it's dead, but actually presumes to relate its two elements. "A scream fit to wake a dead man," "to comb all the books" on a subject, "burning a hole in my pocket," "apparent to a boy of five": in each case Perelman pretends to live in a world where these words make literal sense:

> That Philomene was a manic-depressive in the downhill phase was, of course, instantly apparent to a boy of five. Several boys of five, who happened to be standing around and were by way of being students of psychopathology, stated their belief to me in just those words: "Manic-depressive, downhill phase."

The Woodpecker

on our television aerial
is not alone in his praise
of thee o infinite sphere
whose center is everywhere
whose circumference is nowhere each morning he is
at it (in praise of thee)
no more convinced by his
sore beak than we by that
other daily sound his tappings most resemble (and
what we thought at first
his mantras were) that is
the drip from the bathtub
faucet dropping down the
drain (in praise of thee)
o sphere whose force is
constant from the center

J. LAUGHLIN

At its worst this device can become a formula all too recognizable by the reader, and sometimes it just isn't very funny:

> I found myself, banderillas in hand, facing the horns of a dilemma.
>
> They tangle and rain blows on each other.
>
> While waiting for these to dry. . . .

Sometimes the same technique is used on a metaphor which is not dead or dying, exactly, but affected or silly. The expression "lean and bronzed as a shad's belly" has that peculiarly specific, masculine-outdoorsy flavor characteristic of writers for *Time* and other admirers of Hemingway:

> What you will see is a middle-aged city dweller, as lean and bronzed as a shad's belly (I keep a shad's belly hanging up in the barn for purposes of comparison). . . .

"You mustn't say things like that." Or, as Perelman himself puts it in a preface to this new collection, "so long and don't take any wooden rhetoric."

IN LARGER ways, Perelman conducts a more or less global war on empty-headed language of all sorts and from the past as well as present. Here is another example from his earlier works (the period 1930-44), in a piece he now calls "Entered as Second-Class Matter":

> Dog mah cats, folks, jes' give me mah spoon vittles, mah side-meat an' yams, an' dat little blue tin of Edgeworth, sho sho. Down the dusty Chisholm trail into Abilene rode taciturn Spit Weaver, his lean brown face an enigma and his six-gun swinging idly from the pommel of Moisshe, the wonder horse. I'm curryin' my dogs in a pail of hot H_2O when the ball-and chain ankles in beamin'. I get the bulge on her both ways from the whistle. Listen, sister, I snarls, Spike McGinnity'll be a pushover for the Kid's meathooks. He'll be kissin' the canvas in two frames. So take a powder. You're slugnutty, grates she, how you gonna do it? Just bend the old auditory apparatus, meanin' ear, I warbles. Women of America, all you worried fatties, simply apply my marvelous Thinno treatment to that sagging, foolish bosom of yours and in ten minutes you'll be as svelte as a Fifth Avenue model — svelter, by Christ. Vy svelter in the city's heat. . . .

Half a dozen bad writers are echoed here, but except for their common origin in the pulp magazines, the various voices have no more relation to one another

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than the jumbled contents of a mailbag. Their *order* seems unimportant, and that is perhaps why Perelman remains a humorist and not a great writer. (Some of his attempts at relation, such as the pun in that last sentence, are catastrophes.) And this particular piece goes on like this for rather too long. But its conclusion suggests a wider range; the madness begins to make frightening sense. By increasing the tempo of his clichés, and by connecting them grammatically into a more or less logical order, Perelman briefly shows off an organized savagery that he may have abandoned in his recent work as simply less marketable. It is worth noticing:

> And now, dear reader, a final word from Mr. Editor Mans. We have scoured the fiction market to set before you *Three Million Tiny Sweat Glands Functioning* in that vibrant panorama of tomorrow so that *Your Sensitive Bowel Muscles Can* react to the inevitable realization that only by enrichment and guidance *plus a soothing depilatory* can America face its problems confidently, unafraid, well-groomed, mouth-happy, breaking the hair off at the roots without undue stench. Okay, Miss America!

IT HAS to be conceded that the quarry both Amis and Perelman are hunting down scarcely qualifies as big game. Where, after all, does the language come from that these two comics hold up to our ridicule? In Amis' case it is the language of dead-beat professors and amateur art-lovers, "the homemade pottery crowd, the organic husbandry crowd, the recorder-playing crowd," as Dixon himself describes them in a rare moment of direct abuse. In Perelman's case it is the language of advertising, Hollywood, women's magazines, pulp magazines, third-rate literature generally. These are not, really, first-class enemies. What we need, if Mr. Evans' worthy ambitions are to be realized and clichés are to be weeded out of our lawns, is a school of satirists with all the skillful concern about language that Perelman and Amis have, plus a willingness to go after big game. The hardest part of this is to know where the big game is. Is it Eisenhower's language? Is it Khrushchev's? More likely it it yours and mine at this very moment. At all levels our society is full of things we mustn't say, or at least shouldn't say. We live, as Mr. Evans so rightly if tritely says, under a "torrent" of hackneyed phrases. That fact, of course, is a tremendous asset to the satiric artist, who never had it so good. And it is the voice of the satirist and comic novelist that will do the job, if any voice will.

Obsessed by Theatre

THE THEATER AND ITS DOUBLE. By Antonin Artaud. Translated from the French by Mary Caroline Richards. Grove Press. 159 pp. $3.95 cloth; $1.95 paper.

Paul Goodman

ARTAUD's little book on the theatre is by a man in love and banking everything on his love. He wills this love to give a meaning to life and he wills by this love to counterattack in the society where he is desperate. What he says is often wrong-headed and he often contradicts himself, but he also sees and says important truths with bright simplicity. "I will do what I have dreamed or I will do nothing"—naturally this comes to doing very little; yet since his death the passion of his dream has moved and conquered theatre people. "He was the only one of our time who understood the nature and greatness of theatre," they say of this confused little book (I am quoting Julian Beck). Now if here for a few paragraphs I try to distinguish the true and false voices of this explosion, it is not to diminish the idol of the theatre people; his passion is more important than sound sense; but it is to help simplify their discussions, in order that that passion can be more effectual.

Everywhere Artaud betrays the attitudes and prejudices of a puritan, self-depriving and with a nausea for ordinary food. I should guess that he clung precariously to his sanity by warding off fantasies of cannibalism and other things he thought depraved. When the theatre broke through this shell and provided him a real excitement, he inevitably thought of it as totally destructive and hellish; it had raped him. The theatre, he says, is "the exteriorization of a depth of latent cruelty by means of which all the perverse possibilities of the mind are localized."

He is wearing blinders. He does not seem to conceive of the more ordinary neurotic or simply unhappy man to whom the magic of the work of art is its impossible perfection, its promise of paradise. And for the happy there is no art: "Where simplicity and order reign, there can be no theatre."

So he famously derives the theatre from the last stages of the Plague, when "the dregs of the population, immunized by their frenzied greed, pillage the riches they know will serve no purpose or profit. At that moment the theatre is born, i. e., an immediate gratuitousness provoking acts without use or profit." He goes on to quote St. Augustine's horror of the theatre's poison. And he ends with a rhapsody on Ford's *Whore*, whose content seems to him to be the plague itself. All this is brilliantly told, with good oral savagery; it may be only a partial view of theatre, but it is a hot one that could give birth to fine works.

ALAS! as he thinks it, he becomes frightened of his love, and he begins to reiterate a tediously moralistic theory of illusion and catharsis, false in itself and in direct contradiction to the best things he has to say elsewhere. The action, he reiterates, is only on the stage, it is "virtual" not actual, it develops an illusory world like alchemy; its aim is to "drain abscesses collectively." He seems to think that this symbolic action is the primitive theatre magic, but the very point of the primitive magic is that it is not virtual, it makes the grass grow and the sun come back; the primitive is not afraid of the forces he unleashes.

Artaud's theory of draining the abscesses seems to look like the Greek view of catharsis, but there is a crucial difference: for when it had purged the passions, the Greek play restored its audience to a pretty good community, further strengthened by the religious rite that the play also was, that sowed the corn with the dismembered limbs. But Artaud's play would purge the audience of such vital vices as they have and let them down into the very world from which there is no escape but the asylum. Just so, Artaud is beguiled by the wonderful combination in the Balinese theatre of objective and accurate complexity with trance and indeed witchcraft; but he astonishingly does not see that this is possible because it rises in and still rests in the village, its everyday way of life, and its gamelan. Artaud makes the fantastic remark that the Balinese dances "victoriously demonstrate the absolute preponderance of

PAUL GOODMAN's four-volume novel, The Empire City, *will be distributed by The Readers Subscription in 1958. The Living Theatre will give his* Family of Abraham *in January.*

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the *metteur en scène*"—there is a delusion of grandeur indeed!

Artaud betrays little humor, but his view of comedy brings him to the same dilemma, the fear of total destruction. Comedy, he says, is "the essential liberation, the destruction of all reality in the mind." No, *not* all. Comedy deflates the sense precisely so that the underlying lubricity and malice may bubble to the surface. Artaud always thinks the bottom will drop out and that through the theatre one is "confronted with the absolute." But it is not the absolute but always a risky next moment that is very real.

But let us start again on a positive tack, and see where Artaud is strong. Artaud is great when he insists that theatre, like any art, is an action in the sense of a physical cause; it is not a mirroring or portrayal that can be absorbed by the spectator and interpreted according to his own predilections. It is not a fantasy. He rightly compares it to psychoanalysis: "I propose to bring back into theatre the elementary magical idea, taken up by psychoanalysis, which consists in effecting the patient's cure by *making* him assume the apparent and exterior attitudes." Let me say this my own way: the moment of communication we are after is not that in which a structure of symbols passes from the system in one head to the system in another, when people "understand one another" and "learn something." The semanticists, the language-reformers, the mathematicians of feedback do not give us what we are after; the interesting moment is when one is physiologically touched and one's system is deranged and must reform to cope with the surprise. This Artaud wants to say and does say.

IT IS in the context of theatre as effectual action that Artaud comes to his celebrated assault on literary plays, his refusal to use text to direct from. It is not that he means to attack speech as such, for he understands perfectly that speech is a physical action, it has intonation, it is continuous with outcries and natural signals. He wants, he says beautifully, "to manipulate speech like a solid object, one which overturns and disturbs things, in the air first of all." And his remarks on breathing in the essay on Affective Athleticism are solid gold; for the breathing of anger or some other affect has far more theatrical value than the verbalizing or confabulation about it, which can certainly profitably be diminished.

But there is an aspect of the action of speech that he quite neglects and that makes his attack far too sweeping. Words have inter-personal effect, they get under the skin, and not only by their tone but especially by their syntax and style: the mood, voice and person of sentences, the coordination and subordination of clauses. The personalities of men are largely their speech habits, and in the drama of personalities the thing-language that Artaud is after is not sufficient; we need text, but a text not of ideas and thoughts, but of syntactical relations. Artaud polemically condemns Racine as literary, but he surely knew that Racine's theatre did not depend on the content of those speeches, but on the clash of personalities in them, and especially on the *coup de théâtre* of the sudden entrances and the carefully prepared big scenes. *Coup de théâtre* is theatre as action. If the old slow preparation makes us impatient, the fault may be ours.

Artaud neglects these obvious things because he has, I am afraid, one basically wrong idea: he says that the art of theatre aims at utilizing a space and the things in the space; and therefore

Complin

1.

For all my ills, I lie with night
Waging slumber on conspiring cells
Abroad in streets of the brain's curfew.

Around a zodiac of sleeplessness
We fraternized, my fears and I,
Bedfellows after a day's campaign.

And still the tender guts of care
Yearn for forsaken ills. They arraign
Me, the conscript regiments of mind.

2.

In sixteen casement squares of night
Suddenly moves for no one's sake
The unhurried multitude of sky.

With me they wake in our patch of ills,
To susurrus of crickets fiddling with
Cheops' troubles several worlds ago.

For all his care, kept bound and bent
In dimensions of himself: was his sleep
Solid? did he stir beneath the stone?

3.

In my blind watch, I at least contend
With still watchers across night's keep,
In ratio of rest and strife, rock and tree,

Or mirror of a whole, the utterly
Silent lake upgathering all it takes—
Fish, night heron, and final scent of sleep.

And upgathering me, taught again
to measure
The mild zodiac of dark, and know
my end
Beyond the sixteen squares of night.

HORACE HAMILTON

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he makes quite absolute claims for the *mise en scène.* But this is too general; for the theatre-relation is that some one looks at and is effected by, not a space with things and sounds, but persons behaving in their places. Theatre is actors acting on us. So the chief thing is neither interpreting the text nor the *mise en scène,* but the blocking-and-timing (conceived as one space-time solid): it is the directedness of the points of view, the confrontation of personalities, the on-going process of the plot. Artaud was misled, perhaps, by his experience of cinema, where the one who makes the montage, the so-called "editor," is paramount, for what we experience is the flow of pictures. But for the blocking-and-timing of theatre we need, as is traditional, the collaboration of three: the actor, the director and the dramatic poet.

Politics of Spinoza

SPINOZA AND THE RISE OF LIBERALISM. By Lewis Samuel Feuer. The Beacon Press. 323 pp. $7.50.

Abraham Edel

HOW FAR must one go into the personal, social and historical setting of a philosopher in order to understand his ideas? Professor Feuer's book goes a long way toward giving us an answer to this old theoretical question, not by theoretical argument but by dramatic and convincing example. For he has taken Spinoza, who in the popular image is the very prototype of the isolated philosopher contemplating all being, and presented his development, reactions and ideas in their relations to the turbulent milieu of the seventeenth century generally and to the particular balance and tensions of the Dutch Republic. The result is a masterful fusion of history, psychology and philosophy which may very well serve as a model of method in contemporary philosophical biography and philosophical criticism.

Spinoza's career is an exciting, not a placid one. Successful in business before twenty, he came under the awakening liberal-revolutionary influence. He was excommunicated from the Jewish community not simply for religious reasons but because, Professor Feuer concludes after a detailed examination of the issues and the judges, his ideas and associations were seen as a threat to the community. He abandoned the commercial life and its competitive ethics to make his retreat among a Mennonite group, sharing the pantheistic ideas which in that period had a wide equalitarian social potential. He emerged from this passive stage to become an active theoretical defender of the Republican Party of John de Witt against the monarchical convictions of the House of Orange. Professor Feuer points out that his philosophical pronouncements of this time constitute "the first statement in history of the standpoint of democratic liberalism." When de Witt was murdered by the mob under desperate war conditions (a crisis in which Spinoza had to be restrained from throwing away his own life), social reaction set in. Spinoza's democratic dreams evaporated and he assumed the life of the isolated philosopher. Caution became a condition of survival, and individual freedom of the spirit through resignation by understanding emerged as a philosophic keynote.

SOME of the most interesting parts of the book are the analyses of Spinoza's political writings. Professor Feuer interprets the earlier *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* as a defense of the Republic's liberal philosophy and humanistic ethic against the restrictive Calvinist fundamentalism whose hold on the masses helped deprive the Republic of a mass base. The later unfinished *Tractatus Politicus* he sees as an attempt to understand the fall of the Republic and to explore without illusion the conditions for stability in different forms of government. Professor Feuer's approach explains a number of puzzling and often conflicting strands, such as Spinoza's opposition to any right of revolution, and more particularly the problem which neither Spinoza theoretically nor the Republic practically was able to solve—the fundamental attitude to the mass of men, and their role in a democracy.

A brief review can do little justice to the philosophic detail of the book, nor to the psychological sensitivity with which Spinoza is portrayed. Professor Feuer has successfully conveyed the role of social context without turning his philosopher into a puppet; he has exhibited Spinoza's frontier creativity without overlooking the limitations and contradictions that time and place and stage of social development made inevitable.

ABRAHAM EDEL is the author of The Theory and Practice of Philosophy *and* Ethical Judgment: The Use of Science in Ethics.

LETTER from PARIS

Elliott Stein

THE *affaire Atlantide* at the Paris Opera proved again that, as long as there is a France, and whatever the regime, the management of anything French will involve things theatrical converging on the political, things political lapsing into the theatrical, and that nearly every aspect of the Paris scene will continue to be graced with elements of comedy. The curtain went up on Henri Tomasi's "lyric drama" on October 10—exactly nine months, twenty-seven days and thirty-five minutes late. The work itself did not prove to have been worth waiting for, but the slamming of doors, the making of speeches, the quantity of headlines—and above all the number of questions its presentation brought forth—went far beyond the usual stir of a première in the great theatre designed by Charles Garnier in 1861.

For some time now, it has been no secret that the Paris Opera, which all during the nineteenth and the early part of this century was one of the leading houses in the world, has been in a state of marked decadence. In 1938, the *Palais Garnier* and the *Opéra Comique* were administratively combined as one unit: the *Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux.* Since then, singers and conductors alternate between the two theatres, and the individuality and *esprit de corps* of each house has suffered. Under government control, these theatres have become infected with the spirit of civil servantry—young singers or dancers beginning a career get caught in a bureaucratic machinery similar to that of a post office or nationalized gas company. The ballet corps is the worst paid of any large opera house in the world, in spite of the fact that the *Opéra* receives the largest subsidy of any theatre in the world (more than a billion francs a year for the two houses—more than two and a half million dollars). For such a sum the French taxpayer might be entitled to expect at least a first-rate ballet and opera troupe—unfortunately he's had to make do with the sixth rate.

The first serious cracks in the wall began showing last winter when both theatres were closed for several months, due to a mass strike of electricians, stagehands and dancers. *L'Atlantide* was

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postponed. In the spring, for the third year, the *Théâtre des Nations* festival series (which presented operas by companies from East and West Germany, England and Argentina) gave Parisians a chance to see how things are done in other countries, and this salutary deprovincialization of minds was an incentive to the setting up of an official government commission whose task was to investigate the management and suggest reforms in the status of the national theatres. About the same time, the generally polite *Figaro* ran a series of articles attacking Georges Hirsch, director of the two opera houses, detailing a sizable amount of financial hanky-panky which involved Mme. Hirsch, hats, costumes, account books and trips to South America. Hirsch sued *Le Figaro,* but his case was thrown out of court. Meanwhile, rehearsals of *L'Atlantide* continued. A hilarious insight into how anything connected with France's temples of art is predictable spoil for political greed, was afforded by the reprinting in *Le Monde* of a passage from the governmental transcript, *Le Journal des Débats*, in which Frederic Dupont (the reactionary Parisian deputy whose sobriquet is *"le député des concierges,"*) berated the Labor Minister for refusing the post of "Superintendent of the Toilets in the National Theatres" to a protegée.

THE fireworks really began early in October, when, one week before the belated opening of *L'Atlantide* was scheduled, Ludmilla Tcherina, who was to dance the central role of Antinea (the main character in this peculiar opera does not sing) walked out on her part. La Tcherina explained that she preferred breaking her contract to debasing herself by doing a strip tease in a new work which was being staged in such a ridiculous style. Serge Lifar, dancing master at the *Opéra* for the last twenty-nine years, who was choreographing the ballets, followed her out the door and let off steam, explaining to crowds of delighted club-ladies how he had been dragged *"dans la merde."* M. Hirsch decided to stick to his guns and his deadline, wired Claude Bessy, a young ballerina who was appearing at the Metropolitan in New York to hurry home and learn the part in six days, and got himself a new dancing master.

The libretto for the controversial "lyric drama" is based on the adventure story by Pierre Bénoit which was number-one best seller in France during the years immediately following the First World War. The book, whose escapist theme accounted for a great deal of its popular success at that troubled period, is roughly on the literary level of *The Son of the Sheik*—it was filmed three times, the most recent version starring the late Maria Montez. The novel is centered on the perverse vampiric eroticism of its heroine, Antinea, Queen of the Lost Continent of Atlantis, who enjoys fifty-three lovers, each once, and then has them mummified. *L'Atlantide,* as presented on the *Opéra* stage, proved to be as erotic as *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon.*

At curtain rise, two members of the Foreign Legion, Saint-Avit and Morhange, are lost in the Sahara. Morhange has just decided to become a monk, but suddenly a frightening stereophonic storm breaks out over loudspeakers placed in the first and second balconies. An enigmatic sheik leads the pair to a cave where strange Dunhamesque shapes wiggle infernally. He drugs the men, and Hashish Demons and Daughters of Nothingness emerge and dance, as billows of incense are puffed out at the audience. At the end of this "odorized ballet" (a tradition established a few years ago for a revival of Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*, when the public was sprinkled with a different cheap perfume during each scene), the legionnaires meet Queen Antinea who, in a cape "which drapes her like a sarcophagus," descends a long staircase and in the dimness of her family vault dances the "Waltz of Those Who Died For Love," hungrily caressing each of the fifty-three ex-boy friends, now luminous mummies. The music thickens—tom-toms, gongs and saxophones sound as Antinea chooses the baritone for number fifty-four. But Morhange, sustained by religious scruples, clutches a rosary and refuses to as much as unlace his boots, and the infuriated beauty orders jealous Saint-Avit to kill his friend with a silver hammer. Saint-Avit thumps Morhange, then flees into the desert with Tanit-Zerga (light dramatic soprano), a slave girl who dies of thirst. He crawls around in the sun toward a mirage of Antinea which is projected by lantern slide as far as cyclorama can stretch. Curtain.

TOMASI is one of the world's least adventurous musicians—his previous operas *Don Juan de Manara* and *Sampiero Corso* had already made this clear. His score for *L'Atlantide* alternates between two styles — pseudo-Arabic local-color passages, intended to be obsessive, and which are merely monotonous, and intimate love music along adulterated post-*Pelléas* lines which seems to have been orchestrated by Dukas the child.

Mademoiselle Bessy danced with great grace and seduction, became the toast of Paris and a star overnight. She was the single artist to emerge unscathed from this vulgar, pretentious spectacle upon which a distressing fortune had been spent. At the première, the distinguished audience which included a dozen ambassadors, André Maurois, Youra Bousquet and the Begum, heard catcalls from the gallery of "Boo! Boo! *Musique de clown!*" and *"Vive Meyerbeer!"* Most of the critics gave the opera a good lambasting, and *Le Figaro* did not even bother to review the thing, merely sending a gossip columnist who reported various celebrities' remarks of boredom and dismay. However, Paul Derval, owner of the *Folies Bergère,* was quoted as having spent "a marvelous evening." He offered Mlle. Bessy a fat contract if she would quit the *Opéra* and come and strip.

The *Atlantide* scandal is all the more outrageous when one realizes that in the last *twenty* years only *six* new works

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have been presented at the Paris Opera. Since four of the six were immediate duds, it is no wonder that Menotti has been commissioned to compose a new work (*The Last Superman*) especially for the *Palais Garnier*.

The Tomasi fiasco curiously coincides with the government's refusal to publish the report of the Theatre Reform Commission which was to have been made public upon completion of its work. The report was drawn up last July, and the group is now threatening to break its pledge of silence if it is not published by the coming elections, November 30. *Le Monde* surmises that M. Hirsch's "function" will be abolished, and the two houses revert to their separate status.

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THEATRE

Harold Clurman

SEAN O'CASEY's career has been a strangely troubled one. His fervid and distinguished champions are to be found everywhere in English-speaking theatre circles, but except for his early plays—*Juno and the Paycock, The Plough and the Stars, The Shadow of a Gunman*—he has been almost entirely shunned in his native Ireland and largely neglected in his adopted England.

With us in America, where it seems his most appreciative audience is to be found, most of his plays—particularly in recent years—have been produced off-Broadway. This is understandable in view of the fact that, while most of these plays teem with talent, they are uneven in quality and devilishly difficult to present in a key compatible with their content.

Perhaps the most challenging of O'Casey's later plays is *Cock-A-Doodle Dandy*, now to be seen at the Carnegie Hall Playhouse. It is a play a master director might find hard to stage unless he was blessed with a first-rate company of authentically Irish actors. Small wonder then that it is beyond the capacity of the people who present it on Fifty-seventh Street. They must be credited nevertheless for their valiant effort.

I CALL the play difficult. The truth is that unless one has read it—and I have not done so for some years—one cannot feel secure in any estimate of it based on a production that is less than marvelously atune to its peculiarly mixed music. For the play is a poem and a harangue, a bitterly sad farce, a tender fantasy and a savage parody. It sings and preaches, it guffaws and curses. There appears to be too much outright anger in it, and while one is inclined in a certain mood to find its indignation fully justified, one cannot be altogether certain that its anger, if articulated in the proper vein, could not be turned into a beautifully wry melancholy, a heart-broken sweetness.

The play is presumably a paean to the abundant joyousness of life, but the dramatist's heart is oppressed by frustrations, his grin is distorted by outrage at the forces of bigoted religiosity which darken the landscape of his beloved country. There is no patriot more clamorously harsh than the alienated Irishman. He can express his devotion only in a lament that is rendered strident by derision—and while he sheds tears of compassion, one cannot avoid the sense that they are commingled with venom.

The present production is staged in the manner of burlesque. And while the broadness of the play's humor—it is frequently very funny—seems to call for such treatment, I suspect that this approach is fundamentally wrong. Much of O'Casey's action is rough, and many of his characters are both crude and cantankerous, so that the atmosphere verges on that of a pub in which a brawl is in progress. For all that, I believe the play's message and essential quality might be conveyed with a certain reticence in which the basic reality of the environment rather than the ebullient nature of the play's "business" might emerge.

THE wickedness or the absurdity of the play's negative characters (those who blemish nature) might then become comically pathetic rather than shrill and cartoon-like. None of the characters—no matter how cruel their stupidity—should in the context of such a play be made hateful. For the hallmark of O'Casey's folk, whether they live in Dublin or in the country, is a certain charming provinciality. They are all *small* people—almost "cute"—and one should laugh or weep over them, not detest them. They are limited, they are blind, they are thick-headed, but above all they are pitiful. They do not know what they are doing—and they would be kind if they were not so foolish. They live in a twilight world in which superstition is as natural as lyricism, a world where vice and terror are somewhat infantile and where beautiful dreams—adorably or distressingly naive—can flourish along with rank depravity of behavior. The soil underneath is confined and boggy.

Set in such a world, the play's conflicting moods—the crazy high jinks and the pain exemplified by the crippled girl who returns unhealed from the pilgrimage to Lourdes—could coexist as parts of a whole in O'Casey's tragi-comic vision of his country's grace and woe.

Since I see the play in this way and since it has been directed in almost every respect in a quite contrary sense, I cannot, for all the honest work proffered in this production, praise any part of it—except for the courage manifested in doing it at all. And, as I have said earlier, for the intrinsic worthiness of the project.

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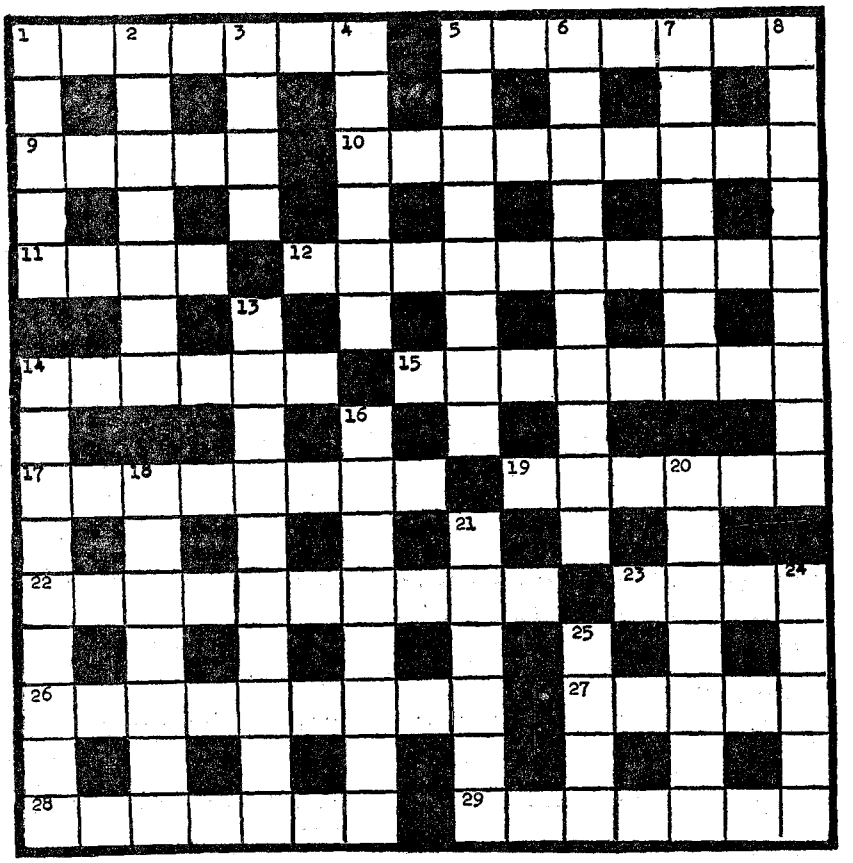
Crossword Puzzle No. 796

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 See 16 down
5 With the locks forced off? (7)
9 See 7 down
10 See 18 down
11 Not all as described by the first person! (4)
12 You might find this trying. (10)
14 He belongs in the upper classes. (6)
15 Someone probably cares for her. (8)
17, 24 down and 27 Instructions to the tardy cadet? (3,5,2,3,5)
19 See 18 down
22 Seizing on pins here? (10)
23 It might be accidental, but likely to call for jack. (4)
26 Missiles suggestive of the cold war? (9)
27 See 17 across
28 Likely to have a reasonably good jet force. (7)
29 Put out of commission by an exploding grenade. (7)

DOWN:

1 Dresses for fires? (5)
2 He might have worked in the bank, long ago. (7)
3 Yesterday's 4? (4)
4 Decomposes about like meat. (6)
5 Suggests what Hebe does with the reputedly ill-tempered. (3-5)
6 Such a treatment brings out the opposite of the symptom. (10)
7 and 9 across Those who deal in suits sometimes have them cut right. (7,5)
8 Their motifs might be good, their motives bad. (9)
13 Evidently isn't a frozen product used in a skillful manner. (10)
14 Stopsigns are not exactly, but one might take heed of them. (9)
16 and 1 across Piper to throttle in the artist's study? (9,6)
18, 10 and 19 Are we continually attached to the less-than-fair? (3,4, 3,6,4,2)
20 One given to deviltry. (7)
21 Driven as a shield might be. (6)
24 See 17 across
25 A yard of wood? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 795

ACROSS: 9 Forsake; 10 Sachems; 11 Elders; 12 Defender; 14 Everywhere; 15 Aria; 17 Toes; 19 Anno Domini; 22 Auctions; 23 Craven; 25 Impasto; 26 Embargo; 27 Northwest-by-west.

DOWN: 1 Differentiation; 2 Abridge; 3 Tea-trays; 4 Eyed; 5 Oysterroot; 6 Arches; 7 Speeder; 8 Observation post; 13 and 1 across When in Rome do as the Romans do; 16 Horribly; 18 Escaper; 20 Inverse; 21 Kirsch; 24 Vent.

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- We are in greater peril of annihilation than we were when the cold war started.

- The world's belief in the United States has been undermined.

- We find ourselves trapped in tight corners where we desperately assume rigid positions that make negotiation virtually impossible.

It is time we faced reality. Whether we like it or not, more than one-third of the earth's population is governed by communist regimes and there is no indication that this situation is going to change any time soon.

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We are unwilling to remain, along with the Russians and the Chinese, captives of cold war.

We are unwilling to sacrifice our country in pursuit of a policy which has been tried and failed.

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